



UPDATE: Thank you to all of you who have written in, called, tweeted or facebook'ed me about SOPA. I've received a flood of comments this morning! Keep them coming. To clarify, I oppose both SOPA and PIPA. Both bills undermine the open access and freedom of the internet. We can protect copyright and intellectual property without the overreaching measures contained within these bills.

ORIGINAL POST:

Today, thousands of websites, including Wikipedia, have shutdown, denying access to millions of Americans looking to learn, share and collaborate through the power of the web. Like these websites, I am opposed to H.R. 3261, the Stop Online Piracy Act (SOPA) as currently written. SOPA is intended to target "rogue" foreign websites engaging in copyright infringement. Combating online copyright infringement is a goal I strongly support. However, if enacted as currently written, SOPA would muzzle free speech and stifle innovation and economic growth.

If enacted, SOPA would overturn laws relating to the Digital Millennium Copyright Act's safe harbor provision, and would allow any government or corporation to block a website, remove it from a search engine, and/or cut it off from payment processors or advertisers, due to a simple allegation that the site posted infringing content, or accusation that the site contained links to infringing content. As a result, sites like Wikipedia, Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube could be required to monitor for any "banned" links, resulting in delegated proactive censorship of the Web, not to mention significant additional operating costs. These sites and others that rely almost entirely on user-generated content would struggle to stay afloat under these rules, and the internet – engine of innovation that we now know – would be irreparably changed for the worse.

The internet has revolutionized the world. It has created countless opportunities for entrepreneurs, small businesses, and individuals from all walks of life. It has only done so because of the open access that consumers and businesses have enjoyed. I believe Congress must enforce our copyright laws while protecting that access, so that the internet remains the great innovator that we know and love.

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